

Suicide Prevention Advisory Committee

November 20, 2007

Call Meeting

Call to Order:

Roll Call was taken with the following members present: Dottie Mullikin, Dr. Stan Edlavitch, Aurita Prince-Caldwell, Chad Hampton, Deb Cook, Susan Calloway, Sheila Osborn, Mark Stringer, Dr. Maureen Hennessey, Dr. Mariann Atwell, Donna Scott

Members absent: John Robbins, Bill Heberle, Ed Riedel, Lesley Levin
Elizabeth Makulec, Sen. Charlie Shields, Rep. Connie Johnson,

Other participants: Joellyn Becker, Scott Perkins, Debbie Meller, Sue Kremer,
Dr. Joe Parks, Ginny Weil, Rita McElhany

Minutes of October 17 & 18, 2007 Meeting

A motion was made by Stan Edlavitch and seconded by Chad Hampton that the minutes of the October meeting be approved as written. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

New Member

Dr. Parks joined by phone to announce his resignation from the SPAC due to new commitments associated with his position as CPS Division Director. He introduced Mark Stringer, Director of the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Dr. Schafer has assigned Mark to represent the Department of Mental Health on the Committee. Dr. Parks was thanked for all his work advancing suicide prevention in Missouri throughout the years and Mark was welcomed to SPAC.

Subcommittee Reports

Public Awareness

Aurita reported that the Public Awareness Subcommittee met and is working on the media award. A letter has been developed to send out to newspapers throughout the state. A draft of this letter was shared with the group. The three options of sending this out included: 1) hard copy, 2) letter via e-mail or 3) send hard copy and follow with an e-mail reminder. Input has been asked from the Public Affairs offices of both the Department of Health and Senior Services and the Department of Mental Health for recommendations on how to maximize the potential for outlets to utilize this information. Option #3 will be proposed. The deadline set for sending this letter is the second week in December.

Goals and Objectives

Stan Edlavitch reported that this subcommittee has not met since the revised mission statement has been completed. Rita McElhany will poll the group and set up a date to meet.

Legislative

Mariann Atwell reported that this subcommittee has not met. They will get a time for a conference call.

Vision

A brief discussion of the revised vision and mission statements which was approved by those participating in the last meeting began with a reading of both statements. The vision statement, "Suicide is not a Solution ..." had support of Committee members. While participating in another meeting, Stan shared this vision and mission statement with the group. To his surprise, Stan reported that a psychiatrist had reacted negatively to the vision statement. Another psychiatrist also reacted and indicated some of their patients clearly view suicide as a solution. This feedback was so strong that it was suggested that the vision be shown to suicidologists and various others to get their reaction and then come back to the December meeting with results. Each SPAC member is asked to share the vision and mission statements with 2-3 others to obtain some reactions. Please include psychiatrists if at all possible.

Mission

It was agreed that the mission statement is good. This will be shown to the others as well for their review. Reminders will be sent to members to report any comments received. Because the mission is closely aligned with the vision, it was decided to postpone formal voting until the feedback from the vision statement is available.

Expectations for SPAC Members

Members responded that this document was helpful. There was a question about whether the action within the document should be linked to the committee. Although wording indicates the second set of suggestions are just that: suggestions, some might be confused in hasty reading. It is important to be careful to not put expectations that would be contrary to what the statute states. A solution would be to create two different documents and to reference the document is based on the Alaska model. The role as members of the committee should be reflected in the first page and the second page should list the additional ideas that can be done for suicide prevention by any committed individual.

It was suggested that these expectations could be put on the website and additions could be included as ideas for action emerge. There are some ideas already on the website; this would enrich the alternatives. The goal is to encourage individuals (either SPAC members or community members) to take action and become involved with suicide prevention on a personal level. The richness of reports from individual SPAC members during our meetings stands as a testament to the variety and depth of actions undertaken by Committee members.

Bi-Annual Report

As voted at the previous meeting, a letter has been sent to the Governor's office requesting that the date for producing the first biannual report of suicide in Missouri be set for July 1, 2008. No response has been received to date.

Aurita presented the draft she prepared of the agency response to their action regarding implementation of the state suicide prevention plan. Members were positive about the summary Aurita had prepared. This is but one portion of the entire report.. The draft of the overall outline of the report was reviewed. It is important to document the difficulties in verifying data and obtaining information to then establish a system so that the second biannual report will have access to appropriate information. It should be the focus in future years to quantify this data.

It was also suggested that possibly the Youth Suicide Grant be in a separate section. The outline indicates this will be in a dedicated section that will display the relationship between strategies in the Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative and the overall Plan for the state.

Additional information has been collected through individual, organization and state agency input on surveys distributed. It was also questioned about how to capture university input into the report. SPAC has deliberately included presentations from UM Columbia and Linn State so we could be up-to-date on these initiatives. This can be captured under the outline "local initiatives" or "other."

Feedback from SPAC members and actual contributions by SPAC members continues to be welcomed.

Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative

The federal Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative expires in September of 2008. The current wording contained in the authorizing legislation prohibits a state from applying for another grant, but there are several indications that this might be changed which would enable Missouri to apply for a second round grant. Given the legislative mandates assigned to SPAC, it seems appropriate for this Committee to advise DMH of priorities for strategies if it becomes possible for Missouri to apply for another grant.

A SAMSHA call is taking place on Monday, November 26. Ten grants will be available throughout the country including territories. Those states that presently have grants cannot compete to receive another one. There are some changes in the new funding cycle: The amount has been increased although the number of awards to be made has decreased. Suggestions for DMH to consider if another application is submitted included:

- Resource Centers be continued on a regional basis as the prime mode of delivering direct services
- Continue gatekeeper training yet include a focus on specific training needs such as training for clinicians that would focus on depression, cognitive therapy, etc.
- Strategies be developed for another application

St. Charles Story on Suicide

Information was forwarded to Committee members once Elizabeth alerted us to the media coverage of this incident. It seems appropriate for SPAC to send a letter to the Editor given the planned activities of the Awareness Subcommittee. A draft letter was circulated and a revised draft letter was sent along with the attachments to this agenda. Not everyone had received, opened, and read the second draft prior to this call meeting. In the meantime, this story has been the focus of national attention. There was general consensus that it is very appropriate for SPAC to comment in a letter and most Committee member want to do that. The letter offers to work with the newspaper to develop a sequel which would include risk and protective factors, sources of assistance, etc. Stan expressed concern that we be consistent relevant to personal details published given the information in the Well Aware newsletter which we support. He asked what was the standard outlined as best practice. It was proposed that folks may want to approach the newspaper about doing a sequel which provides access to information and risk and protective factors. We ran out of time to finalize the letter but several suggestions were noted. These changes will be incorporated into a final draft and circulated to SPAC members. The Missouri Foundation for Health will have suicide prevention as a funding priority during its 2008 grantmaking cycle; in a recent meeting they referenced this article from St. Charles and cited generic concerns about root causes, etc.

Next Meeting

The next meeting call is scheduled from 10-11:30 on Tuesday, December 18. The numbers to call are either 573/526-5622 or toll-free 866/630-9348. The website has been updated with confirmed meeting dates for next year.